

# **The Transformation of Education in Vermont: A Primer**

Presentation to the House and Senate  
Education Committees

Room 10  
February 18, 2009

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<http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/dept/transformation.html>

## **Transformation of Education in Vermont – A Primer**

**Mission:** To ensure all students are prepared for success in college, careers, and 21<sup>st</sup> century citizenship

**Vision:** The educational system provides each student, regardless of learning styles, gifts, challenges, circumstances or expectations, the knowledge and skills necessary for success in college, careers and communities. The educational system responds to the needs of students, provides flexible learning environments rich with 21st century tools and expects students to demonstrate deep understanding through a variety of means.

### **For students this includes:**

- Rigorous and challenging academic experiences in traditional disciplines and expanded emphasis on 21st century disciplines such as world languages, economics, entrepreneurship, personal finance, health, arts, ecology, political science
- Engagement in learning experiences that relate to their interests and connect them with the world outside of school at times and in locations that maximize learning
- Expectations that require them to demonstrate their learning through applying it in new situations
- Opportunities to receive credit for individual experiences, internships, volunteerism, service work, and non-traditional educational experiences
- Access to a broad spectrum of support services based on their individual learning needs
- Taking responsibility for their learning by demonstrating the ability to explain what they are learning, why they are learning it, and what constitutes success
- Involvement in a system that solicits, values, and respects student views on their education

### **For educators this includes:**

- Using more time to facilitate learning in order for students to achieve deep understanding and less on dispensing facts and information
- Employing a wide variety of instructional practices that are based on the learning needs of individual students
- Teachers, administrators, and staff having access to a wide range of resources enabling them to provide a breadth of learning experiences and appropriate supports for every student
- Clear and coherent expectations for student performance in a collaborative and professional environment that supports appropriate autonomy, shared leadership, and shared accountability

### **For families and communities this includes:**

- An active role in supporting student learning in the school as well as providing opportunities for student learning outside the school building
- Family and community members engaged in deep and purposeful planning and coordination with students and school staff regarding educational programs
- Commitment to high expectations for student performance and support for collaborative learning environments
- The benefits of the economic value of strong schools and outstanding graduates

We must remember that transforming our schools is more of a journey than a destination. Change is a long-term process that requires broad community support, steady commitment over time and the courage to embrace new ways of teaching and learning.

# The Transformation of Education in Vermont



State Board of Education

and



February 18, 2009

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## Goals:

- Why - Our basis for Transformation
- What it is – The vision
- What learning will look like
- What we've been up to
- Where we go from here



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## But first, a little history....

- The concepts aren't new:
  - *A Nation at Risk* - 1983
  - Block Schedules in Secondary Schools
  - Distributed Leadership
  - *High Schools on the Move*
- Exacerbated by Transformation from:
  - Manufacturing Base
  - Information Base
  - Service Base

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## Why – Our Basis for Transformation

- Globalization and Technology Influence
- Need for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Knowledge & Skills
- Standards-driven Education and Results

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## Globalization

- US has 75 million highly educated workers; China has 300 million.
- With technology and automation nearly everything could be outsourced.
- 3.3 million white-collar jobs & \$136 billion in wages will shift from U.S. to India, China and Russia by 2015. (*Forrester Research Brief*, 11/02)

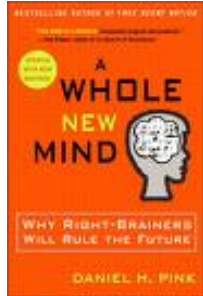
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## Technology & Information Growth

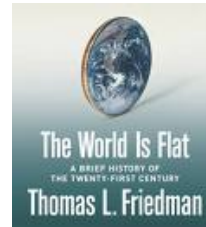
- The 21<sup>st</sup> century will see a thousand times greater technological change than occurred in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- For example:
  - During two years in 80's, Internet grew from 20,000 to 80,000 nodes.
  - During two years in 90's, Internet grew from 20 million to 80 million nodes.
- When this year's kindergarten students graduate in 2021, they will be operating in a world that has 64 times more information than exists today.

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## We can't base the Future on our Past



- Competitive edge  
= creativity & innovation
- Abundance
- Asia
- Automation



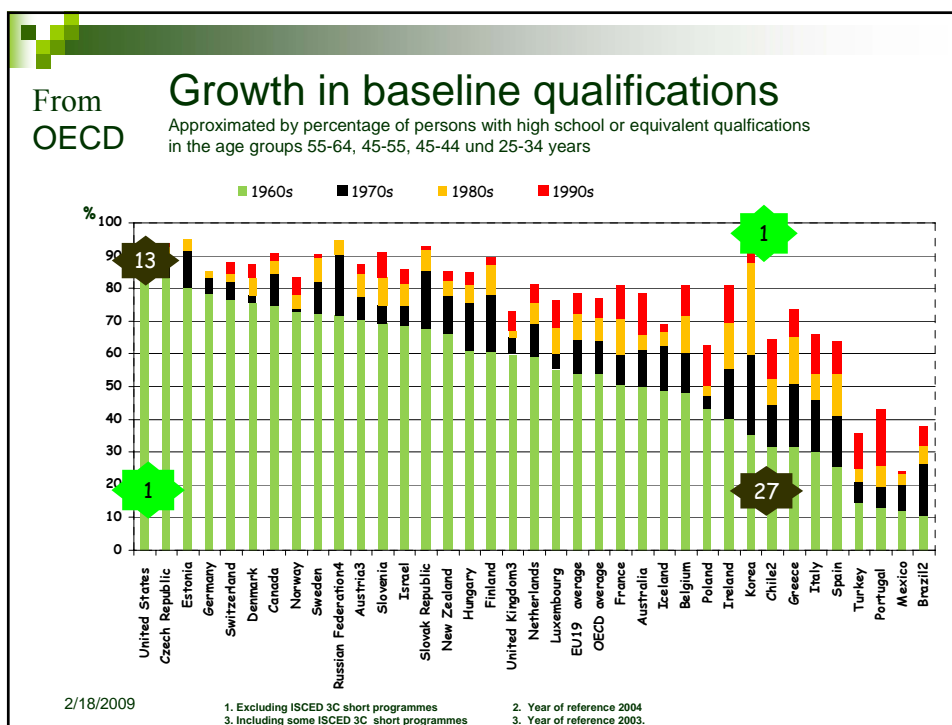
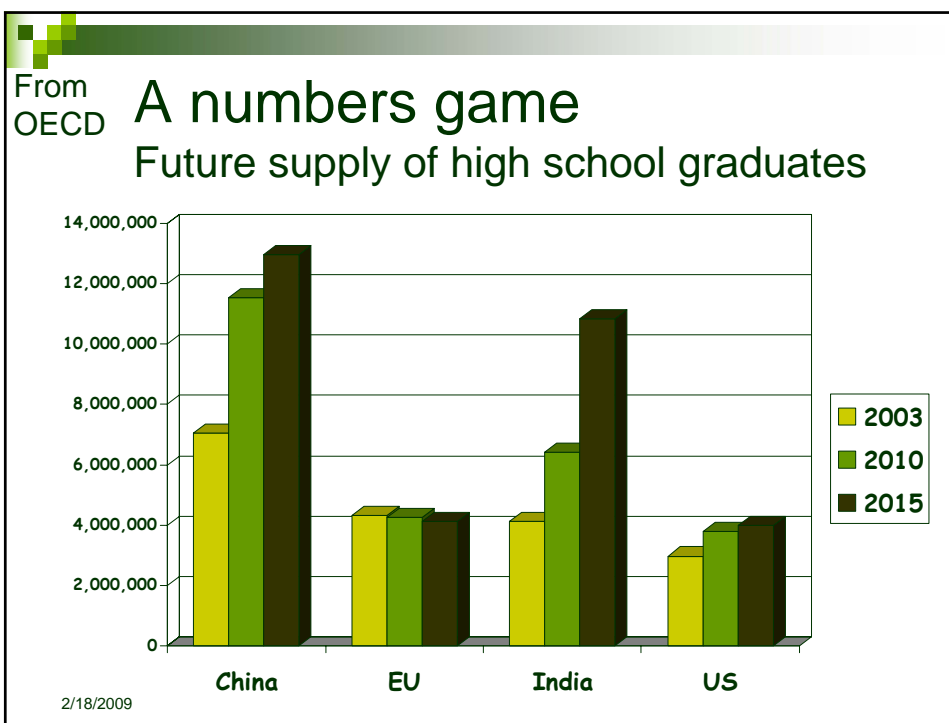
- Americans compete in global, Web-enabled playing field
- Allow for multiple forms of collaboration in real time, without regard to geography, distance even language

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## 21st Century Careers

	<u>20<sup>th</sup> Century</u>	<u>21<sup>st</sup> Century</u>
<b>Number of Jobs:</b>	1 – 2 Jobs	10 – 15 Jobs
<b>Job Requirement:</b>	Mastery of One Field	Critical Thinking Across Disciplines

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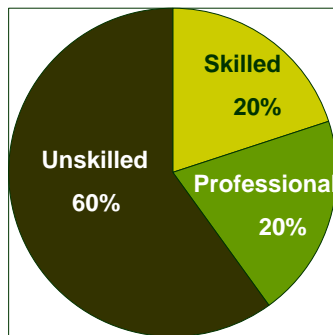
## South Korea.... On college entrance exam day

- Offices and stock market open one hour later  
... to keep roads clear for students.
- All other students stay at home  
... to keep schools quiet for test-takers.
- Planes are grounded and incoming foreign aircraft circle at 10,000 feet  
... so students are not interrupted for the audio part of the test.

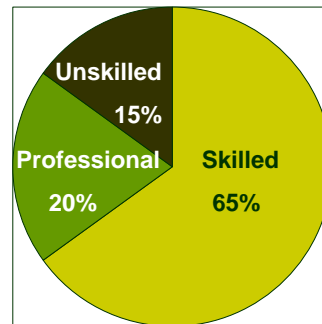
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Wall Street Journal, Nov. 12, 2008

## Skill Level Changes



1950



1997

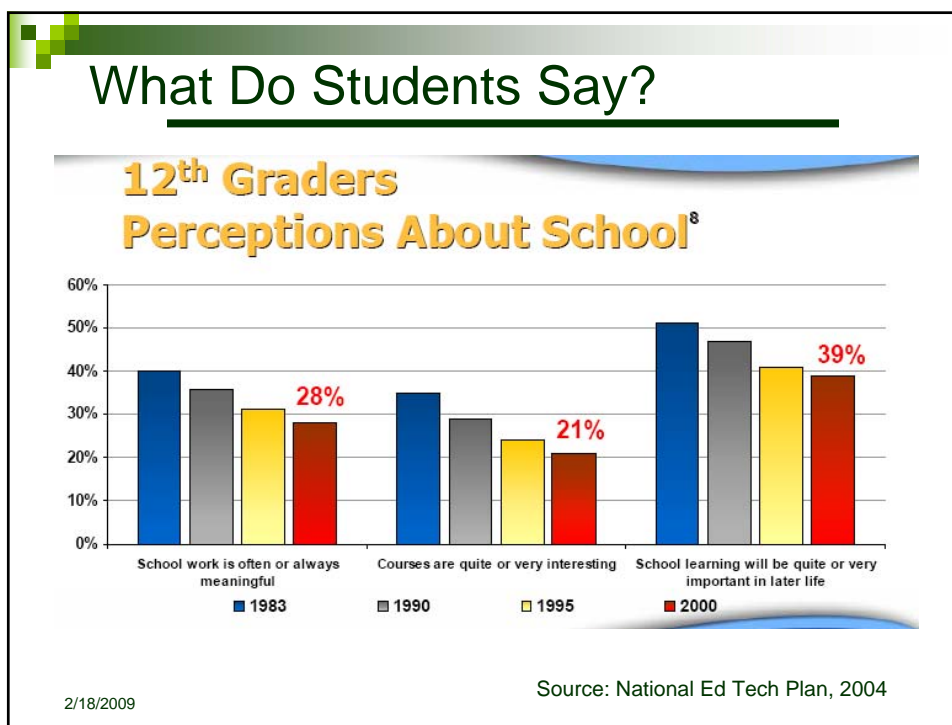
*National Summit on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Jobs*

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New Context 21 <sup>st</sup> C Skills Required	
<b>Global Competition:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Global Awareness</li> <li>•Information, Communication, Technology (ICT) Literacy</li> <li>•Creativity &amp; Innovation</li> <li>•Critical Thinking &amp; Problem Solving</li> <li>•Cross Cultural Collaboration</li> <li>•Entrepreneurship</li> </ul>
<b>Changing Nature of Jobs &amp; Careers: (New P21 study)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Critical Thinking &amp; Problem Solving</li> <li>•Innovation &amp; Improvement</li> <li>•Flexibility &amp; Adaptability</li> <li>•Leadership &amp; Initiative</li> <li>•Productivity &amp; Accountability</li> <li>•Research &amp; Learning Skills</li> </ul>
<b>Information Growth:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Information Literacy</li> <li>•ICT Literacy</li> <li>•Critical Thinking &amp; Problem Solving</li> <li>•Research &amp; Learning Skills</li> </ul>
<b>Technology Growth:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Information Literacy</li> <li>•ICT Literacy</li> <li>•Critical Thinking &amp; Problem Solving</li> </ul>

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## Vermont students were asked: What works well for you in school?

- flexible scheduling
- building (and sustaining) relationships with communities and school staff
- independent study
- real-world connections
- student empowerment
- a variety of options and pathways
- exploratory learning experiences

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## What would make the current system better?

- Positive, comfortable learning environment, accommodating different learning styles
- Making opportunities such as technical centers better-known
- More efficient scheduling and classrooms
- Student/teacher relationship support
- Respect for and inclusion of diversity in the learning environment
- Community-school connections
- Flexibility and variety
- Eliminating required courses
- Alternate options for graduation
- Individualized learning and instruction
- Less bullying and fair punishment
- Less homework, and a connection to real-life



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## And what do our results tell us?

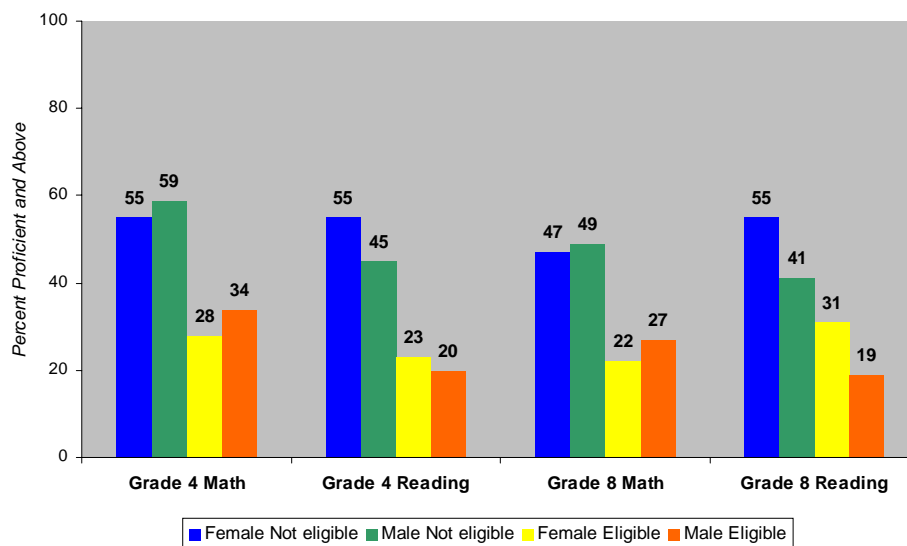
- National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
- New England Comprehensive Assessment Program (NECAP)
- Graduation Rates



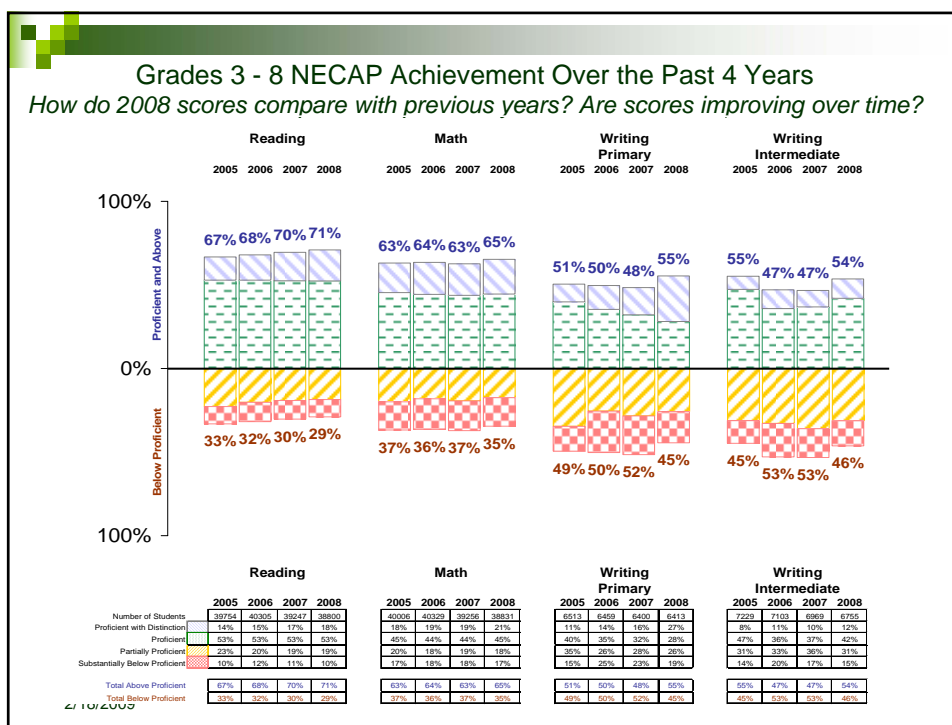
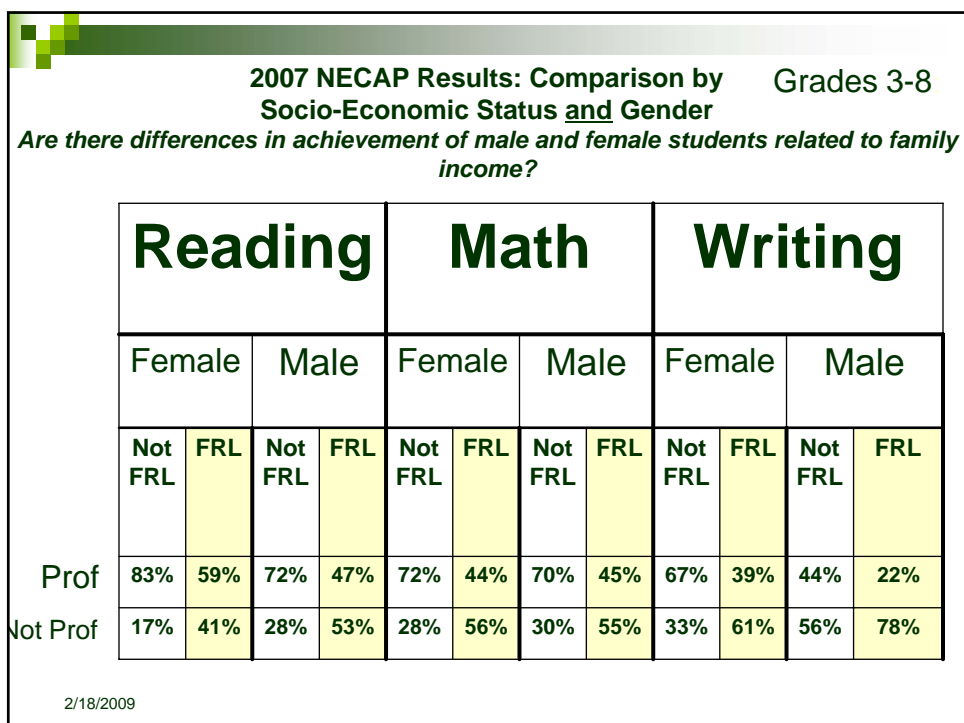
- Significant portion of students are not achieving standards
- Significant variation in performance based on gender and poverty

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### NAEP 2007 Math and Reading (Grades 4 & 8) Gender and Poverty Status



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## Vermont Cohort Graduation Rate (2006)

Group	Number	4-yr Grad Rate	Still Enrolled
All Students	7322	85%	6%
FRL	2213	71%	11%
Not-FRL	5109	91%	4%
IEP	1179	66%	18%
Not IEP	6523	89%	4%

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## There Are Two Kinds of Dropouts

- Unenrolled Students
- Mental Dropouts

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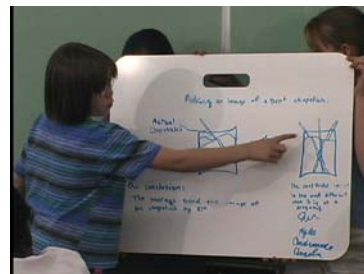
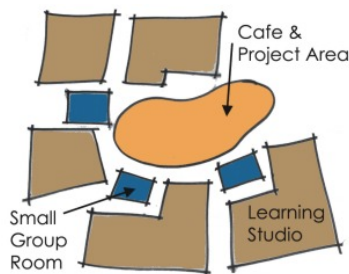
## What **IS** Transformation?

Transformation means focusing on student learning by creating educational environments that respond to the needs of students, provide flexible environments rich with 21st century tools, and expect students to demonstrate deep understanding through a variety of means.

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## Learning Environments? Think.....

Structurally & Functionally



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## Structurally



- Flexible spaces
- Efficiency
- Movable walls
- Clustering
- Access to technology



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## In a “transformed” learning environment:

### Teachers will be ....

- Teaching students **how** to learn as well as **what** to learn
- Questioners
- Collaborative
- Adaptive
- ICT Savvy

### Students will...

- Demonstrate competence
- Inquire
- Choose themes based on interest
- Follow different paths for learning
- Be held to high expectations

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## Learning will....

- Not have to occur between 8 – 3
- Not be bound by location
- Be driven by student interest
- Take advantage of technology
- Not be determined by Carnegie unit

And students will be....



Collaborative



Active



Creative



Technology Competent



Engaged

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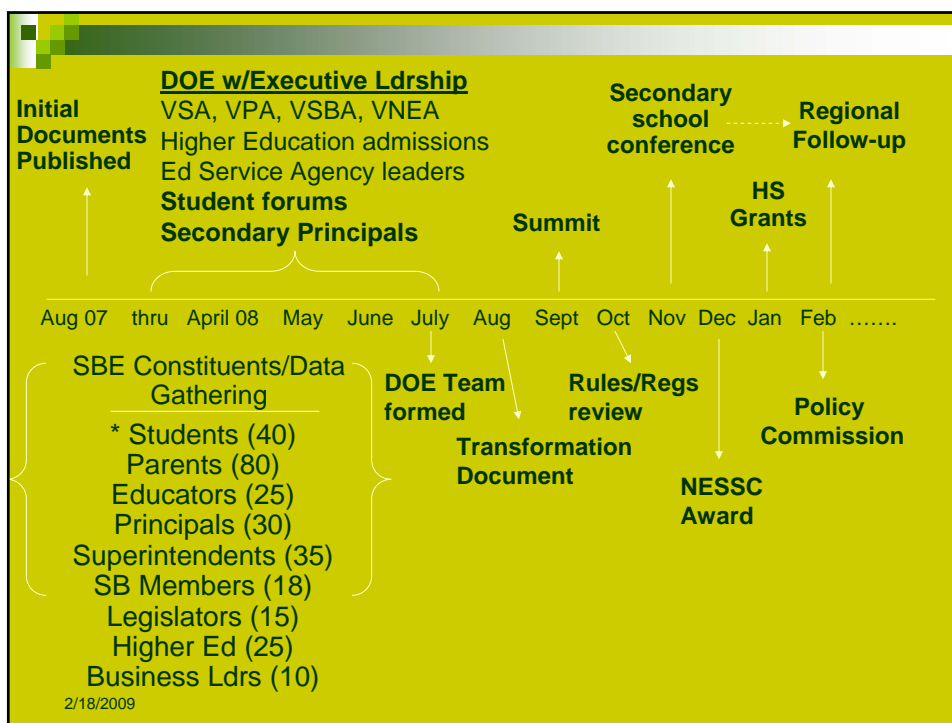
## What's happened so far?



Photos courtesy of Jeb Wallace-Brodeur

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## Recent Conversations

- Educational Service Agency (ESA) Leadership
- Career-Technical Center Directors
- Higher Education Admissions Directors
- Vermont Council of Teacher Educators
- Vermont Standards & Assessment Council (VTSAC)
- Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators (VSBPE)
- Vermont-National Education Association Board (VT-NEA)
- NE Superintendents
- Champlain Valley Curriculum Coordinators
- Vermont Association of Middle School Educators (VAMLE)
- \*\* Individual districts: CSSU, St. J



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## Educational Transformation Summit September 25-26, 2008

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### Outcomes:

- Develop Mission/Vision
- Communications Plan
- Engage Governor
- This is bigger than “education”
- Meet Again

### Follow-up on 1/20/09:

- Confirm commitment
- Identify leverage points
- Continue discussions

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## Secondary Conference November 20, 2008

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- Builds on May conference with principals & CTE Dir
- Secondary School Leaders in Vermont working together
- Build statewide momentum for secondary school efforts - begin to build a common vision for how secondary schools need to change to prepare students for 21<sup>st</sup> century
- All high schools and tech centers invited – 80% attended
- Four-person teams
- Examples of secondary implementation from around the US
- To be followed by Regional follow-up meetings

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## Secondary Conference Follow-ups

- In collaboration w/ Educational Service Agencies  
Three of five completed:
  - Chittenden County, Southeast Vermont, Rutland area
- Provide guidance and ideas to DOE for specific support needs. Preliminary feedback includes:
  - Identification of public school transformation models
  - DOE as broker for conversations
  - Support for ground-breaking work
  - Create policies and expectations that support transformation
  - Based on input from field, layout a multi-year plan with benchmark timeline and clear products/expectations



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## Transformation Policy Commission

Recommend a Transformation policy framework that:

- Reflects analysis of the broad spectrum of policy issues
- Based on research
- Identifies high leverage policy
- Balances support and pressure for school action toward transformation
- Includes specific language for legislation and/or administrative rule
- SBE to build 2010 legislative agenda

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## New England Consortium

Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island  
and Vermont

### Strategic Activities:

- Create cross-state systems of support
- Implement changes in state and local policy
- International benchmarking – aligning with 21<sup>st</sup> Century standards
- Performance-based assessments

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## Grants and Funding Opportunities

- **Secondary Transformation Grant**
  - Focus on student-centered instruction
  - Three Awards at \$75,000 each
  - Potential Round Two Awards - \$50,000 each
  - Timeline: 11/08 – 6/10



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## Some Examples of Our Transformative Work

- Vermont Integrated Instruction Model
  - School wide tiered system of intervention and support
- Comprehensive Local Assessment System
  - ID best practices in developing local assessment
  - Focused on using data to inform instruction
- Heart Rate Monitors program
  - Integrates technology into Physical Education
- 21st Century Community Learning Centers
  - Involves communities
  - Real-life, hands-on activities

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## What's Next?

- Policy Commission plans
- Products for secondary based on feedback
- Implementation of NESSC & look for additional funding
- Develop plan for local district support – tool kit?
- Involve and inform Vermonters across the state
- Identify and support examples of Transformation



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## Contact Information

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